

# MAGAZINE

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## AGRICULTURE.

### Is Snow useful to Farmers?

Numerous farmers are strongly impressed with the idea that lands are injured by lying bare through the winter, and that a good covering of snow is a sure friend of a fruitful season. It is probable that this impression or notion has its foundation in long experience; though it is not very obvious to all the eyes. It is not very difficult to see that a covering of snow is of much service before it melts, when it is watered in the highways to save the soil from being frozen. We may be permitted therefore to feel of being opposed by any known facts, or conclusive experiments. It is the months of April and May are called the poor man's months. They fall gently on the earth compared with showers of rain, and they are not so much liable to run away into hollows and gullies as rain from a sudden thunder cloud.

Here we may conclude without a great stretch of the imagination, that snows are better than rains. For showers of rain beat the ploughed ground down and leave the high lands without enough to slake the thirst; we have now two arguments for snow in preference to rain.

A third argument is that as we shall probably have much rain in winter when there is but little snow, and rain too on ground that is not much frozen on the surface at the time of its coming, the soil is washed down from the highlands into valleys and streams, where it is often useless to the owner, and the loss of which is a serious detriment to his farm.

When the ground is covered with deep snows in water all the rich particles of the rain remain as they were before winter; and on the melting of the snow in spring the earth becomes saturated with sufficient water though none may fall from the clouds.

It is often suggested by farmers that the soil is injured by hard freezing, and that this is a reason for wishing it to be covered with snow, as snow is known to protect it and to prevent its being frozen very hard.

But we cannot assent to this theory; we have never seen any evidence to prove that soil which escapes freezing is better than soil that has been frozen deep through the winter.

On the contrary we incline to think that hard freezing is quite useful to grass fields, if no others. All know that grass fields need to be stirred up once in a few years or they become tight bound and yield but a half a crop. In the operations of freezing and thawing every particle may be supposed to be loosened to change position. Thus we see the year after the fall, when the temperature is the same; the coldness has taken place and new life is imparted by a change of the particles.

Those of our readers who are better pleased with facts than with theories are invited to inquire whether lands that are annually frozen are not better for grass than lands that never feel the winter frost; whether the New England States do not produce more hay, cere, &c. for the Carolinas and other countries as warm as they.

It has been shipped the last year from Maine to Mexico—from Bangor to Vera Cruz. And it is annually carried south from our northern States to the farthest south. The great Mississippi cannot bear enough of her waters to supply New Orleans, and States that have the longest winters and need the most hay have to furnish that article annually to our southern cities.

Thus we may see how Providence takes care of all. Cold weather and frost are made use of to render more productive those climates that have most need of great supplies of fodder through our long winters. In these addition to the hardships which labor imparts, enable us to spare of our abundance to those who could see nothing of this kind from our stores.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

### DIFFICULTIES IN RAISING PEAR STOCKS.

Mr. Editor.—I noticed an article in last week's Ploughman, upon the subject of raising pear seedlings. Being interested in the subject and having had some experience in raising the seedlings, I hope to see more written upon the subject as the business is new to most persons in this country, and much information is needed, in order to insure success.

I therefore propose to make a few enquiries, hoping that some of your numerous readers may be induced to answer them, (if they have had any experience on the subject,) by giving the results of their own experiments and observations, and at some future time I will give my own.

Is there any remedy for the blight which strikes the leaves during the summer, thereby stopping the growth of the young stock at once?

What is the best method for destroying the lice, which feed upon the young stock, and check its growth while they remain, if not for the remaining part of the season?

Should the seeds be taken from the pear before being planted, or not?

If the young stocks are to be taken up in the autumn of the first year, how are they best kept in a healthy state during the winter?

Finally, how should the soil be best prepared for the growth of the young stock?

There are doubtless, other questions to be considered, but the foregoing I believe to be the most important, and involve all others.

Roxbury, Mass. Dec. 20th, 1847. B.

Here is a most curious fact that cannot be answered at once, and probably not in this age to the entire satisfaction of all cultivators.

We have a fancy that nothing short of long trial—of actual observation and experience—will determine what kind of soil is most agreeable to the pear tree. We are more than half convinced, however, that this tree is not more particular in regard to its food than the apple-tree. The lumps are known to die more suddenly, but this may be wholly owing to the preference manifested by the *Girdler* to the pear tree over the apple-tree. This is a fact, the canker-worm prefers the apple-tree and never attacks the pear-tree.

Before we talk much of fire blight and the diseases of trees, we should procure magnifying glasses and count the numerous tubes, invisible to the naked eye, that prey upon vegetable life.

In regard to the raising of young pear stocks, we should like to hear from some gardener who has successfully succeeded in the enterprise. It is quite certain they require more care than most of our nursery trees, and we invite the attention of writers to this subject.

The *Girdler*, as we have stated in former numbers, works underneath the bark of the limbs and completely girdles them. They then drop suddenly, and are supposed to be sun-struck, or to have the fire blight. [Editor.]

### MILKING STOOLS MADE LONG.

Mr. Editor.—There is a convenience connected with milking cows, which I have adopted for several years past, and your readers may do the same if they are so disposed. I take a small box 12 or 15 inches broad and about 6 inches high, and turn it bottom upwards, under the cow, so that I sit on my milk pail. In this way the bottom of the pail is kept clean—the milk scatters less upon the floor and upon the clothes of the milker, and the pail is more secure if the cow is disposed to kick.

I have adopted this stool for several years, and it has proved to be a great convenience. It is made of a piece of straw or rope nailed to the edge of the box and another upon the edge of the stool, forming a sort of loop, something like that of a carpet bag, which I sit on. The stool is made of wood, while the other hand takes the pail, and all are carried about together.

### COW MILKER.

Walpole, Jan. 3, 1848.

We object not to this improvement and should like to see it, but we would offer a slight amendment. Let the box to be set upon the cow be so long that the milker can sit upon one end of it during the operation; he may sit straddling the box if he chooses, and he may have a ball or a loop that will enable him to remove it with one hand from cow to cow. Such a box need not be heavy, and it would keep the pail clean while it would be more safe than when placed on the ground.

A box six or seven inches high would answer the purpose of a stool for the milker and a platform for the pail, for a high stool is not wanted by a good milker.

We are right time to teach youngsters and young men to milk cows. Beginners should not try to cow on cows that are not coming dry, but let them begin on old cows that are not to be milked much longer before calving. Every child of a dairy farmer should be taught how milking should be performed, for this may save them much trouble in future.

We once heard of a family that was obliged to go without sugar because the hired man was sick and unable to milk. The cows, too, suffered for want of a milker. [Editor.]

### THE AGRICULTURAL PROFESSION.

Mr. Editor.—Sir: Enclosed, you will find two dollars—the payment for the Ploughman, for the current year. All persons who wish to be on the same, as early as may suit your convenience. With the exception of the ministry of reconciliation, between the Supreme Being and his revolved human subjects; there is no profession which can be sustained by more moral dignity, in itself, and more important in its relative bearings, than that of Agriculture. It is the basis of all the others, affording to them substance, protection, knowledge, and physical, and moral wealth. A cow raiser, therefore, is a truly admirable character in himself, and is one of the greatest benefactors of mankind. In order to sustain this elevated rank, and to bless the world with the fruits of his industry, it is highly necessary, that a man should be correct as to his moral principle, a man of honesty, of temperance, of chastity, and of uprightness.

In addition to these moral excellences, he must aim to distinguish himself for industry, frugality, courage, and indefatigable perseverance. All his operations should be carried forward according to preconcerted plan. And in conducting these operations, as well as in forming his plan, his own judgment, or good common sense, should be his guide, rather than the deductions of other men's minds, or the results of their experience. Of these, he may, and should make use as he helps, but not as his main supports. For everything on his premises, there should be a place, and everything in its place. Method, neatness, beauty, should everywhere be conspicuous. Small pecuniary capital, or even the destination of such capital, aside from what he has, either wholly or mostly paid for his farm, should not be allowed to lie across the path of his efforts, as an insuperable obstacle. This circumstance should only inspire him with more fortitude and zeal in applying the instrumentalities which he has at his command.

Though obliged to operate on a small scale, let him do what he undertakes thoroughly, in the best possible manner. Going forward in this way, in the process of a few years, he will find, to his great joy, that much has been accomplished—vastly more, than he at first anticipated. "Wherever man has done, man can do." And having ultimately achieved great objects by very limited means—having converted an unproductive farm—perhaps a farm, rough, stony, and hard of cultivation into one clothed with verdure and loaded with the various rich fruits of the seasons, he may really admit to his own mind a far higher satisfaction, and is deserving a much greater degree of commendation from his fellow-men, than his neighbor who accomplishes proportionally no more, perhaps not half as much with means four-fold greater.

It is the earnest desire of the writer, sir, that in conducting your useful paper you may be instrumental of elevating the profession, more and more, of that class of the community, for whose benefit it is most particularly designed; not getting, that in elevating that, you proportionally elevate the professions of all the other classes. Through this and other corresponding channels, may industry, knowledge and true virtue everywhere be diffused, giving stability to our institutions, and ensuring the transmission of our republic, a free and independent nation, down to the latest generations.

Affectionately, your friend and patron.

R. G. D.

Grafton, Jan. 1848.

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We have always considered the business of Agriculture as honorable as any in this land, and we hope the time is near when it will be as profitable.

### CHEAP ICE HOUSES FOR FAMILIES.

Mr. Editor.—It is very seldom I sit down to read the Ploughman without finding something which interests me, and it is not uncommon that I find an article which it seems to me should interest a great many others. When this is the case, I feel as though it was my duty to call your attention to it. I know you will excuse, although you may not think as I do. The article which is the occasion of this notice, I find in your last number, headed "Ice Houses," and signed, a practical Farmer. The article appears to be taken from a paper called the *German Town Telegraph*. The article is a short one, but none the worse for that, and although it may not prove correct in every particular, yet it should be read by every farmer and all the farmers throughout New England. Any one may be considered a great luxury with ice in hot summer weather, yet it is not an article of great necessity, so far as the family is concerned. It is a fair trial, would be willing to dispense with it, if it could be procured at the very trifling expense named in the *Telegraph*.

I wish, however, a Practical Farmer had told us how to build an ice house that will contain five cords of ice and keep it safe and sound throughout the year for five dollars. I presume he will do this, if you should make the enquiry, and I for one will feel under great obligations to you if you will take the trouble to give it in some future number of the Ploughman (with your permission,) to give you my views in relation to ice for family use in the country, and the most convenient method for securing the same.

It is necessary that the article appear together with the advantages which the present mode possesses over that which preceded it; showing likewise that almost any family may have it in great abundance and close to their door for a mere trifle.

Respectfully,  
NAUM HADY.

Waltham, Jan. 4, 1848.

Mr. Hardy will much oblige us by giving us his method of procuring and saving ice for family use, showing the cost of it, and how much it will keep the month. All persons would keep it if they could have it for a small sum, where they could have access to it without much trouble.

### [For the Ploughman.]

#### A WAY TO WEAN PIGS.

Sir, have you, your good woman all, a great philosopher he was, Who lived some years ago?

That is, I mean, that he was great, In his own self-esteem.

As it, no doubt, to every one, Will from the sequel seem.

This fable, it was so prominent, 'Twas said that he was great, Full every time he went abroad, To hang his hat upon't.

His saws and sayings may were, For wit or wisdom meant, And they were quoted all around, Where'er the people went.

Collected, "oh! in all," they'd make, By all it is agreed, "A fable for the laughing name," That every one might read.

Of physics, metaphysics too, He had such wonderful stock, That often he would dare compete With Newton and with Locke.

O, wonderful gump! I fear to give you the account, 'Twould take more time and ink, Than we have at our command.

A cow-drover was Uncle Joe, And thought himself well skilled In all diseases that beset The cattle of the field.

The head all know him, round about, And all, as he'd appear, With sleeves up-rolled, and naked arms, In veterinarian gear.

O'er fences, ditches, bog and fern They'd fly, and clasp their stations, And sniff, and snort, and cock their tails, Breding his operations!

Mischiefous whims he'd let the fan, And none of these were slow, To toss their caps, and shout huzza! And hector Uncle Joe.

But, "tell us, tell us of the pigs," He'd blurt out, then and there, "Curious reason, then I will, Your wishes gratify."

A lady porker, never was, As learned ones might write, One learned and one mischief nine, All of a white-white.

They'd root and squeal for the tit, To obtain the welcome fat—Just as one greasy lippled did, That office-seeking pack.

The dam, indulgent, let them tug, Till time was for her warning: "Now, as for feeding of her young, 'Twas found she'd no such meaning."

So, Uncle Joe his projects tried To stop the nursing babies— But what avail to force the dam Just as one greasy lippled did.

The doctor, baffled in his plans, To try an odd device, And try a more effective mode, He'd call for the milk-maid.

The mother now was rightly bound, And finally down was pressed, While Uncle Joe, relentless, clapt Each nipple from the breast.

Accomplish'd then the purpose was; The pigs were weaned—had a doubt: The poor, old sow, she died! CROCKET.

THE OLD COW.

We still keep the old cow that rears her age from the spring of 1836. She will soon be twelve years old. She now gives a good mess of milk, for she will not calve till April.

She has given milk the year round, and she should not be permitted when the calf is to be raised.

This is the cow that gave us fifteen pounds in a quarter of butter from the cream collected in one week. She was then eight years old. She had two quarters of milk each day, in addition to her pasturing.

She is now with calf by the Devonshire male, that we procured from the Baltimore stock.

She has been seven months, we have now a full blooded Devon male, that will be a year old in March. His form is perfect and his coat is fine as silk.

### STARCH IN BARK AND WOOD, AND ITS USE.

Probably some of our readers may suppose that starch is a waste of time, and that it is a fact that at certain seasons of the year there is a quantity of this article deposited there, in some trees more than in others. It certainly is not, and it is found in deposited in fruits and seeds. Every school boy, who has had a run through a thorny pine wood at certain periods of early summer, knows how to "sucker" a young pig, and that in time of famine, when the mother is forming the albumen, and which is full of mucilage and saccharine matter formed from the starch, and probably a little starch not yet formed into sugar and mucilage. Some hungry young ones, in time of famine, know that the mother bark of some species of trees, birches, &c., when ground up, will sustain life by means of the starch and mucilage they contain. Every body knows that the maple contains a large quantity of saccharine or sugary matter, at an early period of spring, but apparently little at a later period. Where does it come from, and what becomes of it? A little knowledge of chemistry will tell you that it is derived from the starch that has been deposited in the reserve, and is in a state of fermentation, and the season is sufficiently advanced and the leaves large enough to pump up from the soils the matter necessary for the support of the growing leaves, and the starch is changed into sugar, and is ready to be used by the plant.

Chemists will tell you, and you may even satisfy yourself that many barks and buds contain starch, by rubbing or macerating them in water, and then adding a solution of iodine, as applied to agriculture are of great value and the most of whose conclusions are correct, observes, in regard to this subject, "that the leaves of the potato contain starch, and that the starch is changed into sugar, and is ready to be used by the plant."

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with lime, ashes, and ground charcoal, so that it might absorb and assimilate sufficient carbonic acid for its fruit, and formation of its starch. It might be made to bear every year naturally." [Maine Farmer.]

### DISINFECTING FLUID.

It will be of advantage to farmers, nurses, and every body else, we presume, to know that Sir William Burnett, of England, has discovered a very simple liquid which has the property, when properly applied, of destroying the disagreeable and sometimes dangerous odor of the room where the sick are confined, as well as where any putrid or offensive matter is.

It has been effectively used in the Hospital, in the close sties of patients, sick of dysentery—in the water closets and cess pools, and also in the wards where the air was tainted with putrid exhalation or discharge from sores, with the effect of immediately removing the offensive odors.

The substance used is merely the chloride of zinc, dissolved in water. Any chemist or apothecary can prepare it easily. The method of using it, as adopted in the above hospital, is to supply the nurses with a bottle of the diluted solution, and direct it to be used whenever occasion may require, by sprinkling it over the floors.

In a concentrated state it is corrosive, but when properly diluted, in the proportion of one part to four of water, it has been applied to foul ulcers with great advantage, and wounds that had dead and mortified parts, separating and sloughing off, have been rid of their offensive odor. It has been used in vessels, where the bilge water is very offensive; and it is stated that if applied to any purifying body or flesh, it arrests the progress of putrefaction.

It has been used in the case of animals, upon the farm, it must sometimes be very useful. [Ibid.]

### NOTES OF A TRAVELLER IN GREAT BRITAIN. No. 8.

AGRICULTURE OF WALES. The agriculture of Anglesea, in some parts, is in a very advanced state. Many of the estates of the landlords and gentlemen, are in a very high state of cultivation. That Hon. Member of the House of Commons, the Marquis of Anglesea, near Menai Bridge, also evidences great care and attention, and shows a right directed effort in Anglesea, will secure results equally satisfactory to those made in other portions of the Kingdom. Most of the farms are of medium size—varying from sixty to three hundred acres. The system of tillage, which has been caused by the introduction of the steam plough, and the use of the reaper, has been a great improvement upon the improvement of the country, has been changed to a commendation, which has proved, I am told, very beneficial. The tenant is now at liberty to make improvements, and realize to himself all the benefits resulting from them, instead of sharing, as heretofore, in the profits with the landlords, while all the expenses were borne by himself. There are still various restrictions in the lease, some of which are very unwise, and alike injurious both to landlord and tenant. The right of gaming, which is preserved on most of the estates, by which the tenant is prohibited from selling or disposing of his land, and the tenant is prohibited, under heavy penalties, from destroying the game, however injurious to his crops. Observing in a grass field, where some *Salix* were growing, that the grass had been very much injured, and the owner of the land, who was a very good farmer, who he did not kill them. His reply was, that the law was quite as severe for killing a hare as for felling, and that he was forced to submit to these degrading regulations, and to keep two hunting dogs for the landlord, and to have them ready when the landlord's order arrives. They are collected from the different farms to the gamekeeper's quarters, where a fine building is erected, far superior to the cottages of the Welsh tenantry—lodgings for gamekeepers and some domestic servants, and a fine quarters for the hounds, large iron kettles to cook provisions for the men, slaughter-houses where the old hares are killed, and every other convenience necessary for the landlord and his friends. When the day for hunting arrives, they go forth over the lands, without regard to crops, and frequently very great injury results to the tenant, and for which he has no redress.

The implements of husbandry are in general quite rude. The Scotch plough is generally used, and the work is generally well performed. The principal crops raised in Anglesea, are oats, barley, rye, wheat, peas, potatoes, turnips. It is a great objection among farmers to buy their own consumption, and they grow a variety of crops, though some of them do not realize very satisfactory returns. The weeding of crops is practiced to some extent as in England, and the fields are generally well cultivated. There are different methods practiced in sowing wheat. Drilling to some extent is adopted; but broadcast sowing on the furrow, I should think the most correct. In giving the wheat, the reaping, and the most generally used. Sometimes the most correct is used, and the cradle is occasionally used. An opinion still prevails among the ignorant, that cradling grain is *forbidden* in the Bible, and that it is a sin to use it. It is the Bible prohibition could be found.

Of their grass crop, the yield when I was there, was very light, and their meadows would almost realize what has been said of Wales—That a man may now in them all day, and carry home his day's work at night. It is told that, in some meadows, the mark of the swath continues from year to year, and on some farms I should think, from the appearance, that the swath could be no doubt but it is so. Their implements for mowing are very rude and awkward. A straight and clumsy scythe, very broad scythe, secured at the bottom of the swath with an iron rod from the swath to the back of the scythe. The Scotch plough is generally used, and the work is generally well performed. The principal crops raised in Anglesea, are oats, barley, rye, wheat, peas, potatoes, turnips.

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current to Boston, Charlestown, or near West Cambridge  
 and Watertown. It will be sold on reasonable terms and  
 put on board of the vessel, if wanted.  
 GEORGE D. CLARK.  
 6W\*  
 Salem, Oct. 30th.



